

Spotted Turtle

Scientific Name: *Clemmys guttata*

Class: Reptilia

Order: Testudines

Family: Emydidae



This turtle has a broad yellow-spotted carapace (upper shell), yellow spots on the head and neck, a yellow bar behind the ear, and an extensive black area on the yellow-orange plastron (under shell). Sexual dimorphism is present (male and female appear different). Females are larger than males, but the maximum length is 5 inches. Females also have different eye and chin color, a flatter plastron, and shorter tail and vent location.

Range

Their range is the eastern United States from Maine west across southern Ontario and central Michigan into southeast Wisconsin and northeast Illinois.

Habitat

They inhabit shallow wetlands like swamps, bogs, and marshes; stream edges, ponds and streams. They spend some time on land.

Gestation

Incubation: 70 to 83 days in the wild, given optimum nesting periods

Litter

Clutch: 1 to 11 eggs, with 1 to 2 clutches per year

Behavior

These turtles are active only in cooler periods of the year, such as spring and fall. In the summer they semi-hibernate (just as winter hibernating is done) at the bottom of pools or in animal burrows. They are a gentle species. They will mingle with others of their species. They submerge to spend the night and bask or feed mostly in the morning.

Reproduction

Sexual maturity is reached in about 7 to 10 years. Mating usually takes place in March to May, with egg-laying from May to July. The female can retain eggs in various stages of maturity. As with many pond turtles, sex is determined by nesting temperature, with males produced on the cold end and females on the warmer end.

Wild Diet

Omnivorous, but primarily aquatic grasses, insects, invertebrates, tadpoles, carrion